

Kenya FELTP

Background

The Kenya Field Epidemiology and Laboratory Training Program (FELTP) was started in 2004 in Nairobi. This hands-on program trains public health leaders while providing epidemiologic services to national and sub-national health authorities in Kenya and beyond.

The program places emphasis on service, providing real results to the Kenya Ministry of Public Health and Sanitation (MOPHS) as residents pursue a Master of Science awarded through the Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology.

Program Structure

The FELTP is a 2-year in-service training program in applied epidemiology and public health laboratory management. It involves 25% classroom instruction and 75% field assignments.

Residents spend 20 months of full-placement at various sections in the MOPHS or other institutions. They frequently travel to all parts of Kenya to conduct disease investigations, surveillance evaluations, surveys, and applied research on national health problems.

In addition, residents undertake 4 months of intensive classroom instruction in Nairobi, with courses in epidemiology, communications, economics, and management. Residents have a field supervisor and an academic supervisor based in Nairobi to guide and support them in this educational process.

Funding and Partnerships

The program is a collaboration between these entities:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- CDC Foundation
- Kenya MOPHS
- Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, Nairobi, Kenya
- Institute of Tropical Medicine and Infectious Diseases, Kenya
- Kenya Medical Research Institute



The Kenya FELTP was the first program of its kind to include a laboratory component and also the first program in Africa to host residents from other parts of the continent.

Program Impact

The program has brought numerous positive changes on all levels of public health. Outbreaks are detected early, acted upon diligently, and documented properly. An evidence-based decision-making culture has been practiced as MOPHS staff consult and use the available data. In addition, Kenya now has an electronic system to manage disease surveillance data.

Residents Accomplishments

Residents perform crucial services to support the mission of the MOPHS. Since the program's inception, they have

- Investigated a major aflatoxin outbreak in Eastern Kenya and recommended public health solutions,
- Evaluated a laboratory based tuberculosis surveillance system and recommended improvements,
- Conducted a prevalence survey of seat belt usage in Nairobi,
- Investigated a methanol poisoning outbreak,
- Conducted a seroprevalence study of Chikungunya virus disease in Lamu Island, Kenya, and
- Presented their work at international conferences.



Program Accomplishments

Between 2004 and 2008, the FELTP has raised the number of epidemiologists in the Kenya MOPHS from one to eight. Graduates hold prominent positions in the MOPHS on the national level and are working at the provincial level, thus enhancing the public health workforce at all levels of the Kenya health system. Some of the positions include Head of the Health Management Information Systems and Deputy of the Expanded Program on Immunization. Another graduate is responsible for outbreak management in the Disease Outbreak Management Unit.

The program also has helped build capacity in other parts of Africa as trainees from Ghana, South Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda have taken their experience back to their own countries. For example, three graduates from Tanzania have been chosen to lead the FELTP in Tanzania. As graduates return to their own countries and demonstrate the value of their new competencies to their MOHs they are garnering support for improved epidemiology practice in their countries.

To find out more, go to www.kenya-feltp.net/

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